

Dangerous Mistakes a Christian Makes, Part 1 - Acts 25:9-10 – March 28th, 2010

- It doesn't happen very often, but when it does, I really try to be very careful and prayerful to submit to the Holy Spirit and His leading.
- I'm speaking of today's message which I had planned, only to have the Holy Spirit reveal to me that He wanted a different message.
- So, I scrapped what I had, started over, and listened to the still small voice of the Holy Spirit, as He spoke to me about what He wanted.

- It is for this reason that I have titled this series; "Dangerous Mistakes a Christian Makes." Today will be part one in this study of Acts 25.
- In the text before us, the beloved Apostle Paul has been falsely accused and denied of justice after two years in custody in Caesarea.
- What is so notable and remarkable is how he's able to stay on message and avoid dangerous mistakes that could've easily been made.
- In other words, I would like for us to pay close attention to, not just what Paul says or does, but also to what he does not say or do.

1. We try to win favor in the eyes of the world (Verse 9)

9 Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, said to Paul, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and stand trial before me there on these charges?"

- v9 Festus, who is motivated by wanting to win favor with the Jews, asks Paul if he's willing to go back to Jerusalem and stand trial.
- By all accounts, this could have appealed to Paul, given that his heart has always been to win his Jewish brethren to Jesus Christ.
- Paul could've easily made the mistake of agreeing to go back to Jerusalem thinking that it would give him another chance to win them.

- Here's what I'm thinking; we too can fall prey to the notion that if we find favor in the eyes of the world, we'll be able to win the world.
- Please don't misunderstand the lesson of the text, there's nothing wrong with trying to reach the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Actually, that's what Jesus commissioned us to do when He gave the disciples their "marching orders" if you will, recorded in Matthew.

Matthew 28:18-20 18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen. KJV

- Jesus didn't say to win favor in the eyes of the world by becoming more like the world so that you'll be able to win the world to Him.
- The Bible says we win the world when we become more like Christ, not when we become more like the world we're trying to win.
- Think of it this way; "what do we actually have to offer the world if there's no difference between us and the world? What's the point?"

- One reason I believe that the Lord laid this message so heavily upon my heart is because this is the clarion call for the church today!
- Indulge me just a moment as I reiterate my commitment to you as the pastor of this wonderful church we call Calvary Chapel Kaneohe.
- As long as God gives me breath, I will never cave in and water down the message in order to make it more "user friendly" for the world.

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. KJV

2. We become easily intimidated by the world (Verse 10)

10 Paul answered: "I am now standing before Caesar's court, where I ought to be tried. I have not done any wrong to the Jews, as you yourself know very well.

- v10 Paul responds to Festus by telling him that he stands before Caesar's court and that's where he should ultimately be tried.
- He goes on to boldly state that he has not done any wrong to the Jews in Jerusalem, and he knows that Festus knows this very well.
- Suffice it to say, Paul is demonstrating that he's not the least bit intimidated by this politician, nor the court before which he now stands.

One commentator said it this way; "Disgusted with the legal maneuvering and political manipulation [and might I add, intimidation] of the entire judicial system, Paul was tired of being a political pawn. 'I'm not going back to Jerusalem,' he said. 'Enough is enough. I have done no wrong.'"

Another commentator had this to say; "Paul was not afraid to tell a man off when he had it coming to him. ...The Roman governor had misjudged his man. Beneath Paul's polite and polished exterior and his personal grace and charm, all ennobled by his vital Christianity, there was a strong vein of iron resolution and indomitable will. For the moment Festus had only seen a captive Jew, a mere pawn to be expended in his move to check the Sanhedrin's king. He had forgotten that this man was more than a Jew. He was a Roman. He was no ordinary pawn, but one that had made it all the way to king territory. He could move in a direction, something Festus had forgotten. Suddenly Festus found himself checked."

- Paul was neither manipulated nor intimidated by Festus or Caesar's court, because he stood before the Highest of courts to be judged.
- This is the lesson we can learn from Paul as he rises from the pages of holy writ as an example to us in how to avoid being intimidated.
- While we must obey the laws of the land there does come a time when we must take a stand for the One before Whom we really stand.

- I would like to close by asking a question, here it is; "How serious and dangerous is this for us when we make these kinds of mistakes?"
- I believe this is life and death dangerous, and life and death serious, because dancing to the beat of the world's drum leads to death.
- Paul's situation is a matter of life and death, and had he made the mistake and went back to Jerusalem it would have cost him his life.

- Perhaps the question is; how was Paul able to avoid making these costly mistakes? I believe it was because of a built in safety feature.
- Let me illustrate it this way; in our cars, we have both active and passive safety features that are built in to protect us and save our lives.
- The Anti-lock Brake System is activated to keep you out of an accident and the airbags are activated to protect you if in an accident.
- Paul had the active safety feature of the Word of God, and the passive safety feature of the Spirit of God, protecting and directing him.